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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

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RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0506
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RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 3007
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SUBJECT: IRANIAN ARMS FLOWS TO AFGHANISTAN: HOW THE UK PLANS TO USE ITS NEWEST EVIDENCE

REF: EMB LONDON E-MAIL SEPTEMBER 13 TO NEA/IR

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Maura Connolly

¶1. (S) Summary: To most effectively pressure Iran, and discourage the flow of lethal aid from Iran to insurgents in Afghanistan, the UK plans to pass its newest evidence of such flows to the Karzai governments and to Tehran before such evidence becomes public, according to the FCO. There is HMG concern that some reference to this new information might be included, against HMG wishes, in a POTUS speech scheduled for September 13, but that this concern is being raised separately by UK authorities in Washington. End Summary.

¶2. (S) Per ref e-mail, the FCO's Iran Coordination Group Bilateral Team Leader Margaret Tongue on September 13 told London Iran Watcher (Poloff) that on September 5 UK forces in Farah Province, Afghanistan intercepted an arms convoy they had been tracking from inside Iran. According to Tongue, the convoy included EFP,s (explosively formed projectiles) of Iranian origin and constituted in UK view the best evidence yet of Iranian support to anti-Coalition forces in Afghanistan.

UK's plans for this new information

¶3. (S) Tongue said UK past approaches to the IRI on the issue of arms flows to Afghanistan had been hindered by reports of then-current evidence of flows having already appeared in media, making useful discussion of the issue with the IRI extremely difficult. She said the UK therefore wants to raise this new information with the IRI before any public announcement or leaks; the UK also believes the new evidence would be most credible, and create the most leverage against the IRI, if it first comes into public view via the Afghan media.

¶4. (S) The UK therefore plans, according to Tongue, to share this information first in Kabul with the Karzai Government, which would presumably feed it to the Afghan media. UK Ambassador in Tehran would at the same time demarche the IRI, with the same information package copied simultaneously to Washington. Tongue said HMG, with the above sequence in mind, is packaging the evidence, including photos, into deliverable form, hopefully "within several days."

15. (S) Tongue said that there is some HMG concern some reference to this new information might be included, against HMG wishes, in a POTUS speech scheduled for September 13, but that this concern is being raised separately by UK representatives in Washington.

Earlier Intel on Arms: First Use the Sep 5 Evidence

16. (S) Following up on previous U.S.-UK discussions on developing releasable versions of earlier intelligence on arms flows to Afghanistan, Poloff asked for the status of HMG's internal vetting. Tongue said that HMG's vetting is almost complete, but that any UK-U.S. release of such earlier evidence should follow, and be subsumed by, the UK's delivery in Kabul and Tehran, as described above, of information on the September 5 convoy.

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